Contamination of food carried in plastic bags

2625. SHRI K. M. SAIFULLAH: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether cooked food or raw flesh gets contaminated in plastic bags; and

(b) if so, the steps taken to ban their use?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABULAL MARANDI): (a) Use of recycled plastic carry bags for packing food materials may cause contamination due to the likely presence of harmful contaminants in such plastic carry bags.

(b) A proposal to prohibit the use of recycled plastic carry bags for packing or carrying foodstuffs and other related materials is under consideration of the Government. As per the statutory requirement, a 60 days' time is to be given for interested parties to file their comments and objections. Taking the same into account, the final notification may be considered for publication.

गंगा / यमुना कार्य योजनाओं संबंधी कार्य का पूर्ण होना

2626. **श्री जनेश्वर मिश्र:** क्या पर्यावरण और वन मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) गंगा कार्य योजना और यमुना कार्य योजना संबंधी कितना कार्य पूर्ण किया जा चुका है;

(ख) इनका गंगा और यमुना के पानी की गुणवत्ता तथा उसमें घुली आक्सीजन की गुणवत्ता पर क्या प्रभाव पड़ा है; और

(ग) क्या सरकार इन नदियों में जमी गाद को निकालने के लिए भी कोई योजना बनाएगी?

पर्यावरण और वन मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री बाबूलाल मरांडी): (क) गंगा कार्य योजना को दो चरणों में लिया गया है। जून, 1985 में शुरू हुए प्रथम चरण में स्वीकृत प्रदूषण निवारण की 261 स्कीमों में से 254 स्कीमें पूरी हो चुकी हैं। शेष सात स्कीमों के 31.3.1999 तक पूरा होने का लक्ष्य रखा गया है। जुलाई, 1995 से अक्टूबर, 1996 के दौरान 648 रुपये की कुल अनुमोदित लागत में से गंगा नदी की मुख्य धारा से सम्बद्ध कार्य योजना के दूसरे चरण के अन्तर्गत 20.35 करोड़ रुपये लागत की स्कीमें स्वीकृत की गई हैं। यमुना कार्य योजना, जो कि गंगा कार्य योजना चरण-II का भाग है, के अन्तर्गत 479.56 करोड़ रुपये की अनुमोदित लागत में से अब तक 403.45 करोड़ रुपये लागत की 99 संयुक्त स्कीमें स्वीकृत की गई हैं। इनमें से 11 स्कीमें पहले ही पूरी हो चुकी हैं। शेष स्कीमें कार्यान्वयन / अनुमोदन के विभिन्न चरणों में हैं।

(ख) गंगा कार्य योजना चरण-I के अन्तर्गत जहां कहीं कार्य पूरे हो चुके हैं और उनका प्रचालन हो रहा है, वहां अनुपत्र में दिए अनुसार जैव रसायन आक्सीजन मांग और घुलित आक्सीजन दोनों रूपों में गंगा नदी की जल गुणवत्ता में सुधार हुआ है। [देखिए परिशिष्ट 184, **अनुपत्र सं० 76**] नदी जल गुणवत्ता पर यमुना कार्य योजना के प्रभाव की आशा केवल सीवेज के अवरोधन एवं दिशापरिवर्तन और सीवेज उपचार की मुख्य स्कीमें पूरी होने के बाद ही की जा सकती है।

(ग) राष्ट्रीय नदी संरक्षण योजना के अन्तर्गत इन नदियों में जमा गाद को निकालने के लिए कोई स्कीम तैयार करने का प्रस्ताव नहीं है।

Indoor Pollution

2627. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the indoor pollution is more hazardous than the outside popllution;

(b) if so, the details of the research/ study conducted by various institutes in this regard; and

(c) whether government have taken any steps to make awareness of the indoor pollution and its effect on health?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABULAL MARANDI): (a) The intensity of indoor pollution and its impact on human beings would depend upon the type of fuel used, prevalling ventilation conditions in the dwelling units, period of exposure, nutrition level and individual susceptibility to pollutants.

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(b) The Tata Energy Research Institute (TER) and the Indira Gandhi Institute for Development Research (IGIDR) have carried out indoor air pollution studies. No conclusive evidence on mortality and morbidity could be drawn.

(c) The steps taken to control pollution including indoor pollution, are as follows:

(i) The Government have formulated a comprehensive Policy Statement for Abatement of Pollution which envisages integration of environmental and economic aspects of development planning, lays stress on preventive aspects of pollution, promotion of cleaner technologies to reduce pollution and health related aspects;

(ii) Emissions and ambient air quality standards have been notified under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.

(iii) Fiscal incentives are provided for installation of pollution control equipment and also for the shifting of industries from congested areas.

(iv) The Government promotes use of smokeless chullahs and use of non-conventional sources of energy.

(v) An assistance centre for increasing public awareness has been created in the Central Pollution Control Board to provide information and assistance on pollution control and other related matters to the general public and non-governmental organisations.

Sal borer insect

2628. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a news-item published in the Indian Express, New Delhi edition, dated 27th April, 1998 captioned "Sal borer insect has a new home as M.P. Government fells and forgets diseased trees" threatening another epidemic;

(b) whether the presence of the sal borer was first noticed in 1995 in the sal forests of Mandla district and the State Government claims to have brought it to the notice of the Union Government seeking guidelines in the same year; and

(c) if so, what remedial steps Central Government have so far taken and how much money it has spent from 1995 there on till date (year-wise) and with what results?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABULAL MARANDI): (a) Yes Sir,

(b) Yes, Sir. In 1995 the Madhya Pradesh Government first noticed the attack of Sal borer in the Sal forests of Mandla and adjoining districts. The matter was referred by them to the Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education (ICFRE) Dehradun for guidance. ICFRE advised to conduct 'Trap tree operation' during the months of monsoon to check the beetle population and recommended removal of affected trees.

(c) The Government of India, had set up a task force to study the problems, extent of damage and suggest remedial measures. A Steering committee under the Chairmanship of DG, ICFRE was set up to suggest long term measures to check sal borer attack. The Government of India had advised the Madhya Pradesh Government to undertake 'Trap tree operation' and felling of totally dead trees. The Supreme Court however, in March 1998 directed felling of trees falling only in category 1, 2 and 6 *i.e.* totally dead trees and stumps of already felled trees. Hon'ble Supreme Court have also set up a committee under the Chairmanship of Director, Tropical Forest Research Institute, Jabalpur to supervise marking of trees for felling. As the Control operations of Sal Borer are being conducted by Madhya Pradesh Government the cost thereof is also borne by them.